

Dear Governor _____:

In the first sentence of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Congress declares that

. . . it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and local governments, and other concerned public and private organizations . . . to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans. [Sec. 101 (a)]

To make this vision a reality for management of the Public Lands in your state, we are inviting you to partner with us in a cooperating agency relationship for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) land use planning processes. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508) emphasize the use of such arrangements as a means of assuring timely coordination with State, Federal, and local agencies in preparation of NEPA analyses and documentation. We wish to seize every opportunity to work together in a cooperating agency relationship where a State or local agency has decision making authority or special expertise that can enhance and enrich BLM's planning efforts. Not only can BLM's decisions for the public lands have a tremendous effect on neighboring communities, but state and local participation with BLM, in the spirit of NEPA, can help assure that we make the best possible decisions for all Americans.

I have attached a list of the most important planning and NEPA projects that we are undertaking in your state and that will be completed in the next 5 years. We invite you to seek cooperating agency status in any or all of these projects wherever feasible, and we will work with you to ensure that this is accomplished in a manner that follows the letter and spirit of the guiding CEQ regulations. Benefits of achieving cooperating agency status include:

- Sharing and disclosing relevant information early in the analytical process.
- Applying available technical expertise and staff support.
- Avoiding duplication with other Federal, State, Tribal and local procedures.
- Establishing a mechanism for addressing intergovernmental issues.
- Fostering intra- and intergovernmental trust through, for example, establishment of partnerships at the community level.
- Building a common understanding and appreciation for various governmental roles in the NEPA process, as well as helping to assure successful completion and adoption of environmental documents.

Developing partnerships between your State and BLM will create a stronger, more relevant, and more efficient NEPA process. This will help lead to sustainable decision making for the lands and resources under our respective jurisdictions, and a healthy economy and environment that will serve **all** citizens well. Please contact me or my staff at _____ to pursue this endeavor further.

We look forward to working with you.

Attachment: List of Key State NEPA and Planning Projects through 2007